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LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN THE UNITED STATES. By Herman G. James, J. D., Ph. D., Professor of Government in the University of Texas, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1921, pp. XV, 482.

Notwithstanding the frequent quotation of De Toqueville's assertion that "municipal institutions constitute the strength of free nations," it is only in comparatively recent years that professional political scientists, as distinguished from practical, political scientists, have devoted much attention to this sphere of Government in the United States. For thirty years now, however, city Government has been increasingly studied. Within the last decade local rural Government, especially the county "dark continent of American politics," has been critically explored, and the pamphlet, report, and conference literature of this exploration has attained considerable proportions. Books on city Government have been numerous. Fairlie's "Local Government in Counties, Towns and Villages," 1906, and Gilbertson's "County Government," 1917, stood almost alone in the rural field the former to a considerable degree treating of historical development. Professor James attempts to present the subject of local government as a co-ordinated inter-related whole. In the main he has succeeded admirably, especially in view of the fact that there is not one system of local Government in the United States, but forty-eight. This is the chief merit of the book—that it affords the general reader and the student, within moderate compass, an up-to-date description of conditions, recent changes, and tendencies in local Government without overmuch detail, yet with quite satisfactory thoroughness. The style is clear and readable.

The first chapter of sixty-odd pages covers in a sort of compendium form English and French local Government, stressing the differences between the former as the prototype of our American system and the latter as an example of continental centralization. Of the steady development of greater administrative control in England and the agitation for decentralization in France the author says, "the ideal scheme, if such there be, will be found somewhere between the two extremes," and "in both countries, with the formerly undreamed of expansion of governmental activity, the national Governments are in danger of being completely swamped unless more and more functions are entrusted to subordinate divisions, . . . even matters which are recognized as being of direct concern to the nation as a whole, such as education, health, police, etc."

From the second chapter, in which is treated the origin and development of local government in the United States, it would seem that several pages describing certain State systems in detail might well have been omitted. Then come two chapters on the county—organization and functions. The former shows effectively that the county acts as an administrative agent of the State in exercising those functions which attract the greatest citizen interest, law enforcement and the administration of justice, and that there is hardly anywhere one county government, but rather as many as there are independent county officers, each a law unto himself. The discussion of functions would have been improved by a fuller description of what progres-

sive counties are doing and less consideration of the relative amounts of county expenditure for different purposes in various sections of the country.

Following a chapter on the subdivisions of the county, appear two chapters on the organization and functions of city Government, which constitute a good introduction to the study of municipal Government. Unfortunately, not much can be done with the police department in five pages, with waste disposal in one, or the housing problem in a generous half-page. The opinion that education should be administered as a department of the city Government will doubtless arouse opposition. But this position is logical. "From the point of view of sound principles of Government administration there is nothing to be said for the independent school authority," although "the cities in which the school board is appointed by the mayor, the theoretically superior system, have not shown any conclusive evidence of their superiority in the respects enumerated above."

As developments and tendencies of the past decade, home rule, State control, county and city consolidation are dismissed.

The author concludes that of the two kinds of local Government, that one which is distinctly urban, consisting of populations from 500 upwards, fulfill necessary functions peculiar to its physical and social conditions, and as a natural unit for the conduct of local affairs should be retained subject to a larger measure of State administrative control especially in matters of general State concern, but he finds no need for other units of local Government. "The American county is neither a natural unit for the administration of State affairs, nor does it constitute a natural division for the conduct of local affairs" . . . . "the non-urban subdivisions of the county are ineffective areas of local Government." But since the abolition of the county is too radical a proposal for accomplishment in the near future, he advises the conferring of larger powers on the county along the line of local welfare and public works activity. This change would often be properly accompanied by an enlargement of the county area, the separation of all sizable urban communities, and the elimination of areas of rural local government smaller than the county. Some may hereupon lament the deprivation of the rural population of the opportunity Bryce noted: "Nothing has more contributed to give strength and flexibility to the Government of the United States or to train the masses of the people to work their democratic institutions than the existence everywhere in the Northern States of self-governing administrative units such as the township . . . small enough to enlist the personal interest and subject to the personal watchfulness and control of the ordinary citizen." What would Jefferson say? "Those wards called townships in New England are the vital principle of their Governments" . . . . "so do I [conclude] every opinion with the injunction, 'Divide the counties into wards.'"

Numerous references to special administrative areas such as drainage and irrigation districts occur in the book, and there is frequent mention of the recent extensive development of State administrative supervision of local Governments. Both these subjects, in the reviewer's opinion, deserved treatment in separate chapters. One could wish that the author had found some

space or more space for methods of local property assessment, actual county and city utilization of the merit system, the activities of parties in local affairs, and the administration of civil and criminal justice. But all books must have an end somewhere.

In view of the many details presented and the frequent recent changes in local Government organization, the volume seems remarkably free from erroneous statements.

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AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM OF GOVERNMENT. By Westel W. Willoughby, Professor of Political Science, Johns Hopkins University, and Lindsay Rogers, Associate Professor of Government, Columbia University. Doubleday, Page and Company, Garden City, N. Y., 1921, pp. x, 545.

The well-known authors of this excellent book have selected a few outstanding problems in government, such as its sphere, its relation to political parties, the means of making it representative in character, the relation of the executive and legislative branches and the peculiar functions, of each, the need of proportional representation, budgetary procedure and the peculiar questions arising from federal government. Each of these problems is discussed in the light of the experience of the United States and other leading nations.

The task is not an easy one. The authors met with the same difficulty which faces all comparative studies—the selection, digestion and interesting presentation of essential points in widely varying systems. But the work has been well performed, is sound, scholarly and thorough. A few examples will show the practical importance of the problems discussed. In chapters 10, 11, 12 and 13 on the making and execution of the laws, the vital need of leadership is set forth. The authors show that the legislature's true functions are publicity, criticism, and the approval or rejection of policies. The necessary emergence of the executive as leader is implied. The growing policy of passing outlined law, for which the details are to be supplied by the administrator, is commended. The authors do not hesitate to favor European practices where these have borne fruit. Again in the chapter on the judicial function, the advantages and disadvantages of judicial nullification of legislative acts are considered.

It might be wished that the book had included the new governments of the German states in the discussion. Where comparisons are made with Germany the monarchical form is usually described. The volume possesses, among many virtues, one which the lawyer and the advanced student will especially appreciate, it deals in general principles but always gives particular applications. Its style is clear, its references are profuse and well chosen, covering a wide range of authors. The method of expression is temperate and well balanced. It will be found admirably adapted to the